

Thomas Newhorter House (Daniel Nunnemacher House)  
Lehigh and Lawrence Streets  
Allentown  
Lehigh County  
Pennsylvania

PA-1271

HABS  
PA,  
39-ALLEN  
1-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

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PA  
39-ALLEY  
1-

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

THOMAS NEWHORTER HOUSE  
(DANIEL NUNNEMACHER HOUSE)

HABS No. PA-1271

Location: Lehigh and Lawrence Streets, Allentown, Lehigh County, Pennsylvania.

### ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

#### A. General Statement - Architectural Character:

1. A well developed eighteenth century Allentown home. This two story house has a "half house" plan with a large addition to the east. Although a kitchen addition probably occupied the site of this addition since initial construction of the main house, the present addition including the basement probably date from about 1890. This addition will be mentioned only when necessary.
2. Condition of Fabric: The house has not been occupied for about ten years, however, a good roof has kept the fabric in fair condition. In recent years minor vandalism has occurred to the building. The masonry walls appear to be sound as do the wooden members. Minor cases of dry rot are found in some basement members.

#### B. Technical Description of the Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions:
  - a. Original structure: 28'-4" x 32'-1".
  - b. Addition: 16'-0" x 34'-4".
2. Foundations: The walls are limestone rubble masonry about 2'-0", exposed exterior surfaces are covered with stucco. On the south side at first floor level the foundations project 4 inches to form a water table. A similar projection of 1 inch occurs on the west side.
3. Wall Construction: The walls of the house are rubble limestone stuccoed and scored to imitate 9" x 2'-0" masonry units. This surfacing seems to be original. The average wall thickness is 1'-9".
4. Chimneys: There are two brick chimneys located at the center of each gable end. Both chimneys have lower drip courses, and corbelled caps. The north chimney is corbelled out of the gable wall just under the roof and is non-functioning. This chimney is capped with a metal cover of unknown age and a cross pattern ventilator appears in the south side of the chimney. The south chimney contains four flues. This chimney is constructed of stone masonry under the roof line.

5. Porches: A new flight of concrete steps lead to the front door.

6. Openings:

- a. Doorways: An original basement door is located in an arched opening in the south wall. This door is a six panel folding door with a diagonal batten rear. The front door and transom light are mid nineteenth century replacements, however, the frame, paneled reveal, pilasters, pediment, and carved consoles are original and indicate a sophistication reminiscent of pre-revolutionary Philadelphia. Each side reveal has two square and two rectangular panels, while the top contains one panel.
- b. Windows: Two nine light casement windows are located in the south basement wall and appear to be original. A closed window is located on the west basement wall. The north basement wall contains two late nineteenth century iron grills and frames set into larger earlier openings. The window sash on the first and second floors has all been replaced with 2/2 and 1/1 double hung sash. All of the second floor, landing, and first floor north window frames are original. These frames contain finely molded sills. On the first floor west, east and south sides, the original frames were removed and replaced with longer sash about 1890. The first floor west windows have wooden flat arches with keystones, these appear to be original as do the scored stucco flat arches on other windows. The attic contains an original frame on the north and two small original sash and frames on the south. Most original window frames contain original pintels and holders.

7. Roof:

- a. Shape and Covering: Simple gable roof with asphalt shingles on new boards. Side pent roofs are slate covered.
- b. Framing: Hand hewn rafters at 1'-9" o.c. with collar beams and diagonal braces. Original white washed ridge boards are in place. Rafters adjoining masonry gable ends are white washed.
- c. Decoration: The building contains a highly developed cornice, pent, and raking cornice reminiscent of pre-revolutionary Philadelphia work. The cornice includes a dentil molding and ornamented brackets.

C. Description of the Interior:

1. Floor Plans:

- a. Basement: The basement is divided into two rooms by a masonry wall running east and west. A masonry wall projects from the south wall to support the loads of the corner fireplaces above. A small niche is located about 5'-0" above the floor in the north-east corner.

- b. First Floor: The first floor contains two rooms to the south. A Victorian arch joins these rooms. Both rooms have closed corner fireplaces and indications of hearth lines on the floor. A hall runs the length of the north wall with a staircase and door to the addition.
  - c. Second Floor: The second floor contains two rooms on the south side, one containing an original brick hearth and fireplace opening. The other room also contains evidence of a fireplace and hearth. A stair hall and small chamber occupy the north side.
2. Stairways:
- a. Basement: A straight run with a winder at the top, 7-1/2" risers, 11-1/2" treads.
  - b. First Floor: This stair rises in three runs, has 6-3/4" risers, 1-1/2" treads, turned newels, molded hand rail with ramped ends, three turned balusters to a tread, and elaborate bracketed carriage.  
A flight off the second landing leads to the addition.
  - c. Second Floor: Two runs returning on each other, three treads have a turned newel, molded hand rail with a ramped end, two turned balusters to a tread, and elaborate bracketed carriage.
3. Flooring: The basement contains traces of a herring bone pattern brick floor. The remainder of the house has wide pine floor boards.
4. Doorways and Doors: Doors are six and four paneled with raised panels on one side.
5. Walls and Ceilings: The basement walls are white washed stone. On the first and second floors all walls and ceilings are plaster, most of these areas having been given an overcoat of plaster about 1890. The attic walls are plaster. The interior partitions are constructed of horizontal 6" planks 1'-0" on center with a vertical course of 6" planks 1'-0" on center on each side. The outer planks are covered with horizontal hand split lathes nailed with hand forged nails. Removal of the top coat of plaster on both floors reveals the location of a 6" chair rail 2'-7-1/2" from the floor.
6. Trim: A six inch baseboard is found throughout the first and second floors, this is probably original. All of the doorways appear to have original trim as do the second floor, landing, and entrance hall windows.
7. Hardware: The basement exterior door contains a pair of folding strap hinges. All first floor doors have original butt hinges, the second floor doors have "H" and "HL" hinges. Late nineteenth century locks replace original box locks.
8. Lighting: Modern electric.
9. Heating: Coal fired hot water system.
10. Water Supply: A spring which is still damp is located in the northeast corner of the basement with a brick lined trough leading to a hole in the south wall.

D. Site:

1. General Setting and Orientation: The house is at the intersection of a major (Lehigh) and minor (Lawrence) street. A rise in Lawrence Street has all but closed two north basement windows.
2. Enclosures: Traces of a metal fence.
3. Out Buildings: The foundation of a large bank barn appears to the east of the building.
4. Walks: Brick and stone slabs.
5. Landscaping: None.

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